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# The Youth Advocate

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES

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## Student Leadership Program Held Here

"John G!"  
"Birchwood!"  
"Willow Lane!"

The cries of 350-plus students reverberated off the brick exteriors of the central complex of the S. C. Department of Youth Services' Birchwood campus. Raising banners representing "Thunderbird City," "Alpha City" and "Santee City," among others, the high school teenagers marched in orderly fashion into a nearby chapel-auditorium to elect municipal, county and state officials of a mythical government, "Your State."

If it sounds similar to "Boys' State," it is. The organizational process was very similar and the director of the "Your State" program — Edward Pendarvis of Charleston, S.C. — is the same person who has directed American Legion Palmetto Boys' State for the past five years. But there the similarity ends.

The students at the Department of Youth Services are both boys and girls. The program, sponsored by the S. C. Department of the American Legion, is the first ever developed for juvenile offenders.

During the two-day session, held Nov. 15-16 at the Agency's Birchwood campus, students were treated to a laboratory in state government. While learning about the elective and legislative processes these students — some of them second termers at the agency — politicked for, nominated, bargained, voted and elected scores of aldermen, mayors, senators, housemembers, and state officials.

"It was a pure example of children discarding their roles as being lost and damned forever because they are offenders," said Youth Services Director Grady A. Decell. "They became leaders. This is the most exciting thing that has ever happened to me in my twenty-six years in corrections."

Pendarvis, a Charleston real estate developer and board member for the Department of Youth Services, designed the project. Shortly after he was assigned to the board in 1976, he approached state American Legion officials with the idea that a Boys' State project be tried at the Department of Youth Services.

Though somewhat doubtful, Legion officials gave him clearance to develop the plan. "None of us knew what was going to happen," said Pendarvis. "We were just holding our breaths."

Pendarvis had a motive riding underneath his proposal: if it proved successful at the Department of Youth Services, would the Legion consider sponsoring similar projects in other state agencies in the nation that deal with juvenile offenders?

Plans with Youth Services staff were developed in September and October. The agency personnel were to take the place of Boys State staff in running the program.

American Legion State Commander Pearce Fleming, an early enthusiast, approved the project. "We of the Legion know the future of America is in our youth, whether they're at home or in an institution."

Pendarvis arranged for an outstanding list of speakers, including Governor James B. Edwards and Lieutenant Governor Brantley Harvey, and S. C. State College Head Football Coach Willie Jeffries. S. C. State at the time was the number one small college football team in the nation.

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Students jam into Birchwood Auditorium during festivities prior to electing their first Governor. Other photos Page 3.

## Thurmond Gives Scholarship

Sen. Strom Thurmond has established a scholarship at the S. C. Department of Youth Services using the after-tax funds of his salary increase from March through December of 1977.

At a news conference at Birchwood High School, Thurmond said, "Since the salary increase of 29 per cent was paid to me des-

pite my wishes, I was determined from the beginning to use these extra funds for scholarship assistance except for the additional income taxes I would have to pay."

Thurmond added that the scholarship would total \$5,920, which is the amount of his salary increase after taxes, for the 10-month period. Subsequent funds

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## McCottry New Board Member

Charleston physician Dr. T. M. McCottry has been appointed to the board of the S.C. Department of Youth Services, Governor James B. Edwards announced today.

McCottry, a Charleston native, replaces Mrs. Lula Harper of Aiken, who resigned because of health reasons. His term ends in 1978.



McCottry

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## Director's Dialogue . .

by  
Grady A. Decell



The Board of the Department of Youth Services, according to Sec. 24-15 of the State Code of Laws, is "charged with the duty of managing, conducting and supervising" the facilities of the agency. It also has the power "to supervise generally the respective schools (of the agency) and to make rules and regulations for their conduct and management and for the government and discipline of employees and persons under their care."

I wonder how many of you are aware how fortunate this agency is to have such a strong, active and interested board, and what a wonderful dimension they add to our legislative mandate (which is to provide for the care and treatment of youthful offenders). I can truthfully say that without their counsel and support this agency would be in a much, much poorer position. In fact, many of our programs are in existence only because of their desire to see children protected.

They are the unsung heroes of our agency. Most staff members see them only on "Board Days," the once-a-month meeting in the Goldsmith Building. But they give many thousands of hours free time to making this agency run better, and helping it be more effective in helping children unable to cope.

Mrs. Lucy T. Davis, our board chairman, for example, has spent scores of hours of her free time meeting with state legislative officials and with staff executives in helping to solve agency problems. Mrs. Barbara T. Sylvester, present board secretary, has served in every official capacity of the board from secretary to chairman. She has spent, in her almost 10 years of service to the agency, thousands of hours in helping to design and to implement policies and projects. The Youth Bureau and the runaway shelters, for example, have been two of her pet projects. Without her support and vision, neither would be as effective — if they were in existence at all.

Edward Pendarvis of Charleston, our board vice chairman, is not only involved in setting up the "Your State" project, but has volunteered his time to speak to any civic group anywhere in South Carolina! Ray Kenner of Columbia, a board member of two years, is busy during the week with his own company, but is often seen here on Sundays and holidays participating in festivities. Our newest board member, Dr. T. M. McCottry of Charleston, has given every indication of following in their footsteps. Dr. Cyril T. Busbee and his alternate, Dr. Charlie Williams, have given us valuable time and counsel, particularly in educational matters.

### Thurmond . . .

from the increased salary to be received in 1978 will be used in another scholastic award at the end of the year.

Thurmond said he opposed the \$12,900 pay increase but it went into effect without a direct vote of Congress, having "been proposed by the President on the recommendation of the Commission on Executive, Legislative and Judicial Salaries."

The senator said, "Under the law, including rulings of both the comptroller general and the Internal Revenue Service, I could neither refuse the additional money nor avoid an income tax liability on the full amount by returning it to the treasury."

Thurmond established the scholarship in honor of Edward T. Pendarvis of Charleston, vice chairman of the Board of Youth Services.

"Mr. Pendarvis has established an excellent record as director of the annual Boys State program sponsored by the American Legion," Thurmond added. "As vice president of the Youth Services Board, he has also been instrumental in establishing the Boys State formula for the Youth Program called Your State."

### Branham . . .

Branham later travels the road as far as Prosperity. He fails to see the youth. "KSO, Unit 104 returning to base." (As of this writing the child is still at large.)

"Ten-four, Unit 104."

"It's a good life out there in the country," he says. "I got a house I built. Did everything but the brick work. Took me a couple of years but I saved quite a bit of money."

Branham returns to the agency campuses, after a quick lunch at a hamburger stand, and begins his rounds again. This Saturday it's quiet. Only a few transportation calls and minor problems disturb the shift. Branham checks his watch. It's close to four o'clock, shift change time.

"Real quiet," he says, stretching. "Reckon I'll get in a little fishing before supper. I go on the evening shift next week. Would I ever go back to being a machinist?" he says to a question. "I don't think so. I like the challenge. Everything's different. Nothing's ever the same."

I mention these fine citizens and their duties to you to let you know we are not alone in our desire to provide decent care for delinquent and predelinquent children. The board in a recent effort, for example, appeared in unison before Gov. James B. Edwards to ask for additional state funds to keep the Youth Bureau Division in operation statewide through the end of the current fiscal year.

We are now involved in another endeavor — establishing through the mandate of the law, intake and probation procedures for South Carolina. The board has fully supported the agency, not because of any desire to build empires as we have been accused, but to justly provide needed services to children in our state. If this agency hadn't pointed out the need for uniform statewide intake and probation procedures, they might still not be in existence!

As the new year begins, I ask each of you to remember in your prayers these fine people. Because of their dedication and concern, we are a much better agency.

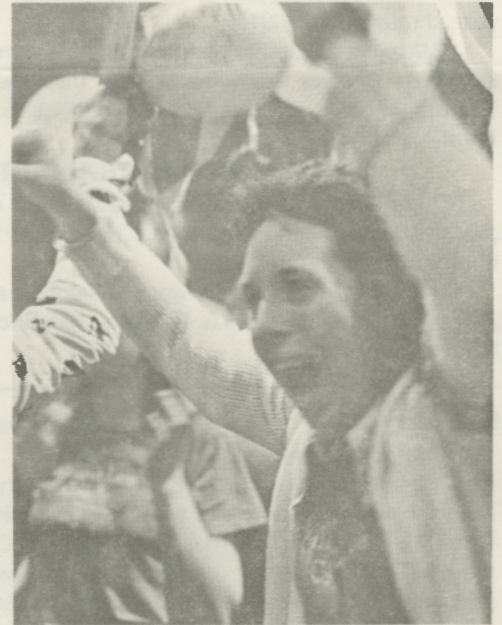
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Mrs. Lucy T. Davis . . . . . Chairman  
Grady A. Decell . . . . . Director  
Edward B. Borden . . . . . Editor





A. W. "Red" McClendon and Gov. James B. Edwards (photo upper left) chat with "Governor" Willie Wydman and American Legion State Commander Pearce Fleming. Board Vice Chairman Edward Pendarvis (upper right) gives Edwards a "Your State T-shirt as Youth Services Director Grady A. Decell beams approvingly. Enthusiasm for her candidates is reflected in this student's (right) features. U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond and Supervisor of Chaplains Horace Youngblood chat with Wydman (lower right) during the first Speaker's Program. Christmas activities included a pageant in Birchwood Auditorium by the students (lower left). Mrs. Rhudine Johnson (left) was honored by the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses for her "unselfish devotion and distinguished service as director."



# The Youth Advocate Scene



# News Briefs

## DIRECTOR HONORED

State Director Grady A. Decell has been named chairman of the Southeastern Correctional Management Council, a prestigious organization dealing with the administration of correctional agencies. Decell was also named recipient of the 1977 Robert W. Beatty Award, presented by the S. C. Youth Workers Association, the highest award for service to youth in the state. Decell, director of the agency since 1970, is 1977 president of the National Association of State Juvenile Delinquency Program Administrators and president of the Council of Youth Services Association.

## GRANT TO CONTINUE

The S. C. Budget and Control Board has approved the appropriation of matching funds for the continuation of the agency's deinstitutionalization of status offenders program.

The board approved the expenditure of \$92,427 in state funds to match \$332,738 in federal funds. The funding is for the current fiscal year, through June, 1978.

"We wish to express our gratitude to the members of the board," said State Director Grady Decell, "for their response to our request. This program is a vital one and will continue to benefit the children in South Carolina."

## CHRISTMAS FURLOUNDS

Three hundred and fifteen students went on Christmas furlough over the holidays and all returned, Chief Public Safety Officer Andrew Rutkowski has reported.

The number of students were, Reception and Evaluation Center, 28; Willow Lane, 109; John G. Richards, 100; Birchwood, 73, and Youth Bureau, 5.

## McCottry . . .

"I am extremely pleased to have a man of Dr. McCottry's capabilities on the board," said Governor Edwards. "He has all the necessary attributes — compassion, a love of his fellow man, and an incisive mind to do an excellent job."

McCottry's appointment means that for the first time in almost a year there is a full complement to the board of the agency that is concerned with rehabilitating juvenile offenders. The others, and their terms, are board chairman, Mrs. Lucy T. Davis, Florence-1980; vice chairman, Edward Pen-darvis, Charleston-1982; secretary, Mrs. Barbara T. Sylvester, Florence-1979; and Ray Kenner, Columbia-1981.

Dr. Cyril B. Busbee, State Superintendent of Education, and the Rev. Horace B. Youngblood, Supervisor of Chaplains for the agency, are ex-officio and non-voting members of the board.

"We welcome Dr. McCottry to the board," said State Director Grady A. Decell. "We know, that with his background in medicine and interest in public affairs, he

will be a valuable addition to our agency."

McCottry, 57, attended Charleston schools and graduated from Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte with a B.S. in Science. He received his M.D. from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tenn. and served his internship at Howard University in Washington. He returned to Meharry for two years' study in surgery.

McCottry has been in family practice in medicine since 1948. He is married to the former Catherine McKee of Charlotte. They have two children: Charles and Tammy Jamelia.

McCottry is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity; the S.C. Medical Association; the Palmetto Medical Association; the American Medical Association and the National Guardsmen's Club.

He is on the executive board of the American Cancer Society and was recently elected to the S.C. Health Care Committee. He was former chief of staff of McClenan-Banks Memorial Hospital in Charleston and has been named "Man of the Year" for his fraternity in Charleston.

## RADIO PRESENTATION

The S. C. Department of Youth Services will begin broadcasting a regular program on the S. C. Educational Radio Network. Public Information Coordinator Edward B. Borden has reported the program should start "in February or March" over WTLR, FM 91.3 in Columbia.

The program will consist of a series of interviews with staff and students on a variety of subjects, ranging from treatment concepts to personal discussions about hobbies and careers. "The purpose," said Borden, "is to give not only an overview of the agency as an effective agent of change, but to show the human side as well."



## SANTA COMES TO DYS

Santa Claus came as usual to the Department of Youth Services. Portrayed by Frankie-San, Alston Wilkes volunteer, Santa jitterbugged into the agency and, after an appropriate ceremony, closed his visit with "Silent Night" in Japanese. The Rev. Horace Youngblood (below, right) presents Wade Hampton Hotel Assistant Manager Ray Kenney a wall rug created by agency students in appreciation for the annual Christmas dinner, given gratis by the hotel staff.





# ON A COOL SATURDAY IN OCTOBER . . .

Lt. Johnny Branham picks up the microphone and calls the base station: "KSO, Unit 104 is 10-8 (operational)."

"10-4, Unit 104, KSO clear."

It is a cool Saturday morning in October. Branham wheels the blue four-door Maverick onto Shivers Road and heads toward the Reception and Evaluation Center campus. His eight-hour shift as a public safety officer for the S.C. Department of Youth Services has begun.

"We normally get briefed on what's happening a half-hour before our shift begins," says Branham as the car turns onto the campus. "And then we begin our patrol. As a supervisor, I'm responsible for what happens on my shift. I have three men working under me — Sgt. Aaron Hammond, and Officers William Bond and Forrest Shirley."

The four men are responsible for security of the agency's four Broad River Road campuses. In addition to R&E, they'll visit on an irregular basis, Willow Lane, John G. Richards and Birchwood, the agency's newest facility.

"We have no set schedule. We keep going through the campuses at odd times so we won't get into a routine."

Branham pulls the car behind three dormitories. "I check back here for students who might be thinking of running away or who have no business back here. If I find any — and sometimes I do — I stop the car and ask them what they're doing. Prevented many a runaway like that."

The area is clear. Branham, a native of Winnsboro, is the agency's "Public Safety Officer of the Year." He was selected, says Chief Public Safety Officer Andrew Rutkowski, because of his attitude, dedication and his aptitude as a law enforcement officer. This isn't the first time Branham's talents have been recognized. In January 1968, the S.C. Senate passed a resolution praising Branham and his brother, Lindsey, for rescuing a Chester woman thrown into Wateree Lake during a boating accident.

and except for circumstances, he might still be a machinist at a Winnsboro manufacturing plant.

"The economy overtook us, and I got laid off. I love machinery

Finished with his patrol of R&E, Branham swings the car towards Willow Lane, two-and-a-half miles up Broad River Road. He has risen through the ranks to lieutenant,



Johnny Branham

work. I really didn't know what to do, so my boy, Joel, who was working at the old John G. Richards campus for the agency, said, "Daddy, why don't you come down here?"

"Well, I applied for the job as Public Safety Officer in Pickens Cottage and was hired. And I've been at the agency ever since. That was eight years ago.

"Most of our work is routine. We transport the kids to the infirmary and downtown to doctors' appointments. We make checks of buildings and vehicles. And we'll stop in a dorm or two to make sure everything's going all right. But there's always that element of something going wrong — of something happening."

All four of the agency's campuses are "open." Except for certain buildings on each campus, children aren't hemmed in by fences and guards. It's a concept that State Director Grady A. Decell approves because it gives the children a chance to trust — and to be trusted.

"Naturally, there're some run-aways," says Branham. "There's no way to keep a child from running if he wants to run. Our job is to find him and bring him back." (The return rate is exceptional. Less than one percent of those that run aren't returned.)

The Public Safety Division's greatest concern is that a runaway might hurt himself — or get hurt — after he leaves the campus. "We've had a couple swim the Broad River (at the back edge of the campus). Fortunately, they made it safely to the other side. They were subsequently apprehended. It is this type of activity we try to prevent."

Branham stops momentarily at the back side of the Willow Lane Campus. He scrutinizes the nearby woods. "These are children that have committed crimes. Some of those crimes are very serious. But they're still children — under seventeen — and there's still a very good chance at rehabilitation. You have to treat them differently than adult offenders."

Branham drives over to the John G. Richards campus and finally cruised the perimeter around Birchwood Campus.

"Let me give you an example," he says. "Suppose we have two boys in a fight. We try to separate them first. And then, if everything fails, we use federal streamers. No weapons like guns or night sticks are allowed. We don't want to physically harm them.

"It takes a special person to work with children who have behavioral problems. You've got to talk to them. You only resort to physical activity if you have to."

Branham was a machinist for 22 years before entering the agency. He'd return, he says, "except that I found this job more interesting. There's something to do every minute. It never stays the same."

"One-Oh-Four, this is KSO."

"KSO, go," says Branham into the mike.

"One-Oh-Four, would you please check the area in which the student was last seen on yesterday. We have a report that he has contacted his hometown and someone is enroute to pick him up."

"Ten-four," says Branham.

"This is one of two boys who ran away from our agency high school yesterday," says Branham. "They led SLED bloodhounds (State Law Enforcement Division) on a merry chase. One boy swam the river. The other boy was apprehended in the water. I've had the feeling all the time that he was still hiding."

On the other side of the Broad River, Branham follows the road toward Newberry, finally turning into a paved road that leads to an abandoned brick plant. "We came over here when the dogs lost him in the water. We weren't able to really pick up the trail again."

Branham inspects a set of prints. "These weren't there yesterday. I'm sure the boy's still here."

A cursory search of part of the deserted property and a couple of nearby occupied houses fails to turn up anything. "They're kids," he says. "They think like children. They're just trying to get home, no matter how rotten it is."

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## Profile:

# Barbara T. Sylvester Board Secretary

**Editor's Note: Mrs. Barbara T. Sylvester, secretary to the Board of the Department of Youth Services, was appointed to the President's National Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and Preventive Delinquency last September. Mrs. Sylvester is former board chairman and has been an active supporter of children's rights for years. PROFILE was interested in her new role and in the national picture in juvenile justice.**

PROFILE: What is the purpose of the committee?

MRS. SYLVESTER: The committee reports directly to the President and to Congress. We are to look into the areas of prevention, juvenile justice operations and the management of all federal juvenile delinquency programs. We're directly responsible to the Congress for all federal dollars committed to juvenile justice programs.

PROFILE: When were you sworn in and how long is your appointment?

MRS. SYLVESTER: I was sworn in Nov. 30 in Washington and the appointment is for four years. We have been given subcommittee appointments. I've been very fortunate to have been appointed to the National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Subcommittee, which is also known as "The Institute;" to another on planning a personnel training conference by March, and to a third as chairman of the Liaison Committee, between the National Advisory Committee and the White House.

PROFILE: What does "The Institute" Subcommittee do?

MRS. SYLVESTER: It's responsible for gathering and distributing data and providing technical and training assistance for corrections personnel. It's an excellent way to upgrade juvenile justice people throughout the country. The March training conference, for example, is open to selected members of the state juvenile delinquency committees. We're trying to make them more effective in their roles as juvenile justice coordinators.

PROFILE: The purpose of the National Advisory Committee, then is —

MRS. SYLVESTER: To stop duplication of effort and to put more accountability on money spent. If two national agencies, say, are operating the same type of group homes, this is duplication of effort. These goals, I'm sure, are supported by everyone.

PROFILE: Is the National Advisory Committee really responsible to the people? It seems that many government agencies aren't.

MRS. SYLVESTER: I should say it is! For example, one-third of the 21 members on the national committee — as well as one-third of all those on each state advisory committee — are under 26 years of age, and at least three must have been, or are currently under the jurisdiction of the juvenile system. Additionally, we're trying to make as many of our national meetings in differing locales as possible because we want to be exposed to people involved in the delivery system.

PROFILE: What's going to be your personal goals over the next four years?

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## Your State . . .

The students were organized into "counties" based on which campus they resided — John G. Richards, Willow Lane or Birchwood. Any student who attended the agency high school — Birchwood High — was an eligible voter in "Your State." Each dormitory on each campus became a "city."

Officials' fears about the success of the project were allayed when on the morning of Nov. 15 Willow Lane — which contains the only girls in residence in the agency — arrived with banners, caps, balloons and striking pink and blue armbands, symbolic of the coeducational aspect of the campus.

The festive political mood communicated itself to students from the other campuses, and an intense rivalry, similar to that in national conventions, prevailed throughout the two-day program.

Lt. Governor Brantley Harvey, keynote speaker the first day, was surprised at the decorum and at the tough, sharp questions on the legalization of marijuana, industry, pollution, women's rights and education.

City and county officials were elected the first day. Campaigning began in earnest for the top political spot, that of governor. All state offices were nominated and voted on the second day.

Willie Joe Wydman, 17, of Greenville, S.C., was elected governor in a close race. His opponent was Christine Smith, a vivacious young woman who campaigned hard against the prevalent attitudes of male chauvinism.

Wydman, a surprisingly mature young man, immediately arranged for a meeting with Decell to discuss some grievances — issues on Sunday lunches and bus transportation — on which he campaigned.

Decell was delighted. "The governmental units they organized will be maintained and their elected officials will be permitted to represent their constituents' views," he said. In short, the elected officials of "Your State" will become part of the management hierarchy at the agency.

Legion Commander Fleming was equally elated. "I was overwhelmed at the response. They showed they can be as patriotic, as loyal, as dedicated as any of their peers. They deserve a second chance."

The project will be presented at the National Boys' State workshop in Indianapolis in October.

Perhaps the ultimate accolade came from the band director of the 282nd U.S. Army Band at Fort Jackson, S.C., which played retreat the first day.

He said he'd never seen such decorum, enthusiasm or attentiveness in a high school group in many months. And because of that, he said, the band will give a free concert to the agency in 1978.

MRS. SYLVESTER: I'd like to see us — nationally, of course — remove all status offenders from the institutions, which is a requirement from the Juvenile Delinquency Act. The main emphasis of the act is preventive delinquency. Secondly, I'd like to see a set of national standards developed so children receive the same treatment anywhere. Thirdly, I'm very much in favor of a unified system. For example, in South Carolina, which doesn't have a unified system, we don't know if there's any follow-up at all once a child is released from our custody. We're now throwing children away so they can be torn apart again. This must be stopped.

PROFILE: It's been said there's a nationwide trend towards punishment, not rehabilitation, of juveniles. What's your comment?

MRS. SYLVESTER: Unfortunately, some people have been swayed by the severe cases that have received wide publicity. Realistically speaking, there are a few children that commit extremely violent crimes. The rest are hurt by this attitude. I wonder what would happen if someone had pinpointed the emotional problems earlier, or had done follow-ups on recommendations. It's clear the entire system needs to be reorganized.

PROFILE: What message do you have to young people regarding your appointment?

MRS. SYLVESTER: I just want to let them know that a lot of us care about them, and we're willing to do something about it.